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REMARKS

Reconsideration is requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Claim 1 has been revised to include some feature of claim 20, with additional revisions. Claim 20 has been canceled accordingly. Claims 2, 5, 8, 15-16, 18, 22-23 have been revised. New independent claim 24 directed to a combination of an analytical tool and an analytical apparatus has been added to track original claim 19. Support for the revisions and new claim can be found in, e.g., Figs. 5 and 6, among other places. Claims 1-19 and 21-24 are pending in the application.

Claim Objections

Claims 8, 15-16 and 22-23 are objected to due to informalities. Claim 8, 15-16 and 22-23 have been revised to address the Examiner's concerns. Withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 102

Claims 1-12 and 17-20 are rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by Winarta et al. (US 6,287,451). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. Claim 1 has been revised to include some feature of claim 20, with additional revisions. Claim 20 has been canceled accordingly.

Claim 1 requires each electrode to extend along a substrate between a first end edge and a second end edge of the substrate. Claim 1 further requires that a disturbing-noise countermeasure electrode that extends toward the second end edge terminate at a first exposed end, that a working electrode that extends toward the second end edge terminate at a second exposed end, and that the first exposed end be located closer to the second end edge than the second exposed end.

The present arrangement allows static electricity from human body or air to be discharged before the analysis circuit is connected, when an analytical tool is mounted to an analytical apparatus. Specifically, the static electricity is discharged through an early contact between the exposed end of the disturbing-noise countermeasure electrode, which is located closer to the second end edge of the substrate, and the corresponding terminal

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of the analytical apparatus. As a result, the static electricity is discharged before the working electrode is even connected to the analysis circuit. This helps prevent the disturbing noise, i.e., the static electricity, from being inputted into the analysis circuit (see, e.g., paragraph bridging pages 15 and 16, among other places).

Winarta et al. fail to disclose an exposed end of a disturbing-noise countermeasure electrode to be located closer to a second end edge of a substrate than an exposed end of a working electrode, as required by claim 1. In fact, Winarta et al. discuss a sensor 10 that includes electrode cutouts 32, 36, 36 adjacent to one end of the sensor 10 for holding chemical reagents. Winarta et al. also discuss conductive conduits 22, 24 and 26 extend all the way from reagents portion to the opposite end of the sensor 10 (see Winarta et al., Fig. 2, and col. 7, line 36 to col. 8, line 52). As clearly shown in Figs. 1 and 2, the exposed ends of the conductive conduits 22, 24, 26 terminate at the same place. Nowhere do Winarta et al. disclose an exposed end of a disturbing-noise countermeasure electrode to be located closer to a second end edge of a substrate than an exposed end of a working electrode, as required by claim 1. As clearly shown in Fig. 1, the portion formed by scoring line 28 in Winarta et al., which is referred to by the rejection, does not have an exposed end.

For at least these reasons, claim 1 is patentable over Winarta et al. Claims 2-12 and 17-19 depend from claim 1 and are patentable along with claim 1 and need not be separately distinguished at this time. Applicants are not conceding the relevance of the rejection to the remaining features of the rejected claims.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 103

Claims 13-16 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Winarta et al. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. Claims 13-16 depend ultimately from claim 1 and are patentable over Winarta et al. for at least the same reasons discussed above regarding claims 1-12 and 17-19. Applicants are not conceding the relevance of the rejection to the remaining features of the rejected claims.

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Claims 21-23 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Winarta et al in view of Rappin et al. (US 6,572,745). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. Claims 21-23 depend ultimately from claim 1 and are patentable over Winarta et al. in view of Rappin et al. for at least the same reasons discussed above regarding claims 1-12 and 17-19. Rappin et al. do not remedy the deficiencies of Wnarta et al. Applicants are not conceding the relevance of the rejection to the remaining features of the rejected claims.

New claim 24 is directed to a combination of an analytical tool and an analytical apparatus. Applicants submit that the features of new independent claim 24 are not seen in or suggested by the references of record. Claim 24 requires a disturbing-noise countermeasure electrode to come into contact with a grounding terminal of an analytical apparatus earlier than a working electrode comes into contact with a voltage applying terminal. This helps discharge disturbing noise, i.e., static electricity, even before the working electrode is connected into an analysis circuit and, as a result, helps prevent the disturbing noise from being inputted into the analysis circuit (see, e.g., paragraph bridging pages 15 and 16, among other places). Neither Winarta et al. nor Rappin et al. discuss the arrangement as required by claim 24. Therefore, claim 24 is patentable.

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In view of the above, favorable reconsideration in the form of a notice of allowance is respectfully requested. Any questions regarding this communication can be directed to the undersigned attorney, Douglas P. Mueller, Reg. No. 30,300, at (612) 455-3804.

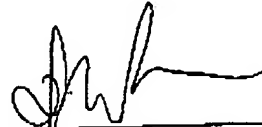


Respectfully submitted,

HAMRE, SCHUMANN, MUELLER &
LARSON, P.C.
P.O. Box 2902-0902
Minneapolis, MN 55402-0902
(612) 455-3800

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By: _____


Douglas P. Mueller
Reg. No. 30,300

DPM/cy